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History

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EDITED BY

M. A. DEWOLFE HOWE

DAVID G. FARRAGUT

BY

JAMES BARNES

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THE

Beacon Biographies

OF

Eminent Americans

Edited by

M. A. DeWolfe Howe

PUBLISHED BY

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BOSTON

DAVID G. FARRAGUT

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PREFACE.

Perhaps no man who ever achieved signal success in some special walk of life was better fitted for it, either by inclination or by training, than David Glasgow Farragut, first admiral of the United States Navy, was fitted for the art of naval warfare. His preparatory training for his profession consisted, not of a several years' course of scientific study at the Naval Academy,—for there was no naval academy in his day,—but of hard service both in the routine of peace, and the work of war.

He was an officer in the naval service of his government at an age when most boys are still at their mothers' apron-strings or scribbling on their slates at school. His book education (if such it may be called) at that period was the little practical learning that his friend and guardian, Lieutenant Porter, found time to teach him, and to have him taught by others.

While a boy of twelve, Farragut was recommended for bravery in action, and,

subsequently, with reason, though with seeming injustice, denied the only reward then possible,—promotion,—on the ground that he was too young for the untried responsibility. Manliness even then was the keynote of his character. He was always a man, in the finest and noblest sense of the word.

A work of this kind requires but a brief introduction. He who reads Farragut's letters and diaries knows the man, his character, and much of his history. There is not a story of the Civil War which does not devote some of its most important chapters to Admiral Farragut's achievements. The volumes of reports to the various secretaries of the navy, shortly to appear, will embody all of his official correspondence, which extended over a period of half a century.

The author wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the kindly assistance of Loyall Farragut in the preparation of data and personal information contained in this small volume, and also his indebtedness to Mr.

Farragut's invaluable "Life of David Glasgow Farragut," constant reference to which greatly lessened his labor and increased his interest in the compilation of the present work.

JAMES BARNES.

NEW YORK, March, 1899.

CHRONOLOGY.

1801

July 5. David Glasgow Farragut was born at Campbell's Station, East Tennessee.

1810

December 17. Appointed midshipman in the United States Navy.

1811

August. Sailed on his first cruise.

1812

June. Sailed from New York on second cruise after declaration of war.

1813

June. Put in command of the *Alexander Barclay* as prize-master.

1814

March 28. His first battle, *Essex, Phœbe,* and *Cherub.*

July 7. Arrived at New York a paroled prisoner.

November 30. Exchanged.

1815

April. Sailed from Boston for the Mediterranean in the ship-of-the-line *Independence,* 74, returning in the fall of the same year.

1816

Spring. Sailed from Boston for the Mediterranean a second time, wintered at Port Mahon, visited his father's birthplace.

1817

Spring. Began an extended cruise in the Mediterranean.

1818

January. Went to study at Tunis with United States Consul Charles Folsom.

December. Reported for duty on board the *Franklin* at Messina.

1819

Spring. Cruise to the Mediterranean continued. First promotion. Appointed acting lieutenant on board the little brig *Shark.*

1820

November 20. Arrived at New York to undergo his examination.

1822

May. Went to sea in the *John Adams.*
December 1. Returned to Norfolk.

1823

February. Sailed in the schooner *Greyhound* for West Indies. Became executive officer of the *Seagull.*
July. Obtained command of the *Ferret.*
September. Married to Miss Marchant at Norfolk, Va.

1825

January 23. Commissioned lieutenant, and ordered to the frigate *Brandywine* to convey Lafayette to France.

1826

May. Arrived in New York. Ordered to the receiving ship *Alert* at Norfolk, Va.

1828

October. Ordered to the *Vandalia.*
December. Sailed for the Brazil station.

1830

February. Arrived back at Norfolk.

1832

December. Ordered to the *Natchez.*

1833

January. Ordered to Charleston on account of the nullification troubles.
May. Sailed for the coast of Brazil.

1834

June. Took command of the *Boxer* at Rio Janeiro.
July. Returned to Norfolk in her.

1838

August. Took command of the *Erie,* and sailed for Vera Cruz.
December. Witnessed the capture of San Juan d'Ulloa by the French.

1839

January. Gave up the *Erie.*

1840

December 17. Mrs. Farragut died.

1841

February. Became executive officer of the *Delaware.*

September 9. Commissioned commander.

1842

June. Took command of the *Decatur,* and sailed for the South American station.

1843

February. Arrived back at Norfolk.

December. Married Miss Loyall at Norfolk.

1844

April. Ordered to the receiving ship *Pennsylvania.*

July. Ordered to Navy Yard, Norfolk.

1847

February. Took command of the *Saratoga,* and sailed for the Gulf of Mexico.

1848

February 19. Arrived in New York. Ordered to Navy Yard at Norfolk.

1850–51

Employed in compiling a book of ordnance regulations.

1854

August. Ordered to California to establish a navy yard.

1855

September 14. Commissioned captain.

1858

July. Left California. Ordered to take command of the *Brooklyn*, and convey Minister McLane to Mexico.

1859

January. Ordered to Hayti.

1860

Took an exploring party to the isthmus of Chiriqui.

1861

April. Forced to leave Norfolk, Va., at the breaking out of the Civil War, because of his loyalty. Removed to Hastings-on-the-Hudson, N.Y.

1862

January. Given command of the Western Gulf Squadron, and sent against New Orleans.

April 24. Attacked and passed Forts Jackson and St. Philip with his fleet, and captured New Orleans.

June 28. Passed the batteries at Vicksburg.

July 16. Commissioned rear-admiral.

1863

March 14. Passed the batteries at Port Hudson.

August 1. Sailed for New York.

1864

January. Sailed for the Gulf.

August 5. Attacked and passed the defences of Mobile Bay, and conquered the Confederate fleet.

August 23. Received the surrender of Fort Morgan.

December 12. Reached New York.

December 23. Commissioned vice-admiral.

1865

January 23. Ordered temporarily to the James River.

April 4. Entered Richmond.

1866

July 26. Commissioned admiral.

1867

June 28. Sailed from New York in the *Franklin* for an extended cruise in European waters.

1868

November 10. Reached New York.

1869

Summer. Visited the Pacific coast.

1870

August 14. David Glasgow Farragut died at Portsmouth, N.H.

September 30. Public funeral held in New York.

DAVID G. FARRAGUT

DAVID GLASGOW FARRAGUT.

I.

DAVID GLASGOW FARRAGUT came of good stock. His father, George Farragut, was a man who had led a restless, active life, full of movement and enterprise. In his veins flowed the blood of a long line of soldiers, sailors, and adventurers, — forbears who had much to do with the history of Italy and Spain; for he was born in the island of Minorca, in the Mediterranean Sea.

On the blank leaf of an old Bible, now in the possession of the admiral's family, there is the following record: —

"*My Son*, — Your father, George Farragut, was born in the Island of Minorca, in the Mediterranean, in 1755, the 29th of September, in Ciudadella, and came away from that island the second day of April, 1772. Came to America in March, 1776. Your mother, Elizabeth Shine, was born in North Carolina,

Dobbs County, near Kinnston, on the Neuse River, in 1765, on the 7th of June. Her father, John Shine; mother, Ellenor McIven.''

The Scotch blood David Farragut inherited from his mother's side was just the admixture necessary to produce the composite temperamental qualities which showed throughout his crowded life,—coolness in the face of danger, the canniness of judgment of the Celt, and the dash and daring, the chivalrous manner, distinguishing the Latin. He inherited also no small amount of humor—a characteristic plainly Scotch—and a deeply religious nature that showed itself upon more than one occasion.

George Farragut, his father, had been a little of everything,—a ''soldier and sailor too.'' He had been an officer in the navy, a major of cavalry in Tennessee, and an explorer and pioneer in the unsettled portion of what was then the borderland. At last he had settled

down as a farmer and planter in the semi-tropical groves of Louisiana.

David Glasgow Farragut was born at Campbell Station, near Knoxville, Tenn., July 5, 1801. In 1809 his father, who had been sailing master of a schooner in the United States Navy, was transferred to the naval station at New Orleans. In this same year he purchased a farm of nine hundred acres on the Pascagoula River. It happened that, upon a visit of Commander David Porter to the plantation, the latter met, and took a great fancy to, the little boy David; and, this fancy growing, he proposed to the father that he should practically adopt him and bring him up with the intention of making him an officer in the navy.

It is evident that even at this early age (Farragut was then short of nine years) he must have displayed something that attracted the officer's attention. At any rate, the proposition was

left to the boy's own decision; and he made up his mind to accept it. When Porter sailed from New Orleans for the North, the lad bade farewell to his own father, and set sail with Mrs. Porter and his adopted parent.

David was placed at school at Chester, while Porter remained at Washington. The Secretary of the Navy, Paul Hamilton, who in the mean time had met the boy, had been so impressed by his manly bearing that he had promised him a midshipman's commission as soon as he reached the age of ten. The fact is, however, that the commission, when it came, bore the date of Dec. 17, 1810; and at that time Farragut was but nine years and five months old.

Porter was not promoted to be a captain until July 12, 1812, but was given the command of the frigate *Essex*, then lying at Norfolk, Va., in August, 1811. The little midshipsman, now ten years

and one month old, was ordered to join him there.

What he writes of himself in referring to this time of his life is so complete that it can here be inserted word for word.

"On reaching the *Essex*," he writes, "I was exceedingly pleased with the ship and her officers. John Downes was the first lieutenant; James P. Wilmer, second; James Wilson, third; William Finch, fourth; John M. Gamble, marine officer; Robert Miller, surgeon; Richard K. Hoffman and Alex. M. Montgomery, assistant surgeons; David P. Adams, chaplain; John R. Shaw, purser. The ship was soon refitted and ready for sea, when we received orders to join the coast squadron under Commodore Rodgers, consisting of the frigates *President*, *United States*, *Congress*, and *Essex*, with the brig *Argus*. Nothing occurred of note until we went into port to winter. We cruised on the coast, and exercised

the crews until they were brought to as great a state of perfection and discipline as ever existed, probably, in the navy. Our ship, the *Essex*, was the 'smartest' in the squadron; and Commodore Rodgers complimented our captain highly. So efficient had our crew become that they were divided into three watches, and that arrangement remained in force until the day of the ship's capture.

"We went to Newport, R.I., on Christmas Eve, 1811, and anchored off the bluffs, not being able to bring up in the harbor. About four o'clock in the morning it commenced to blow very hard from the north-east with sleet and snow, and we let go another anchor, and at half-past six let go a third and a fourth; but she dragged the whole of them, and went ashore just off the bluffs. She heeled over very much; and in a short time the main and mizzen topgallant masts were blown away, everything being so clogged with ice as to render it

impossible to house the masts. It was understood that we lay on a bank, and, if the ship should beat over, nothing could save us from being dashed against the cliffs, which seemed a perfect mass of ice. The only hope left of saving the lives of the crew was to cut away the masts as soon as the ship was sufficiently near the bank; and the men were accordingly stationed at the galley with axes, ready to execute the order, for no one could keep the deck. The captain and first lieutenant were on the lookout by turns, a few minutes only at a time, the cold being so intense that one of the men, an Indian or mulatto, was found in his hammock frozen. Fortunately, the gale abated at this critical period without doing us any further injury; but there was great destruction on the coast from its fearful effects. The *Nautilus* came in soon afterward, with the loss of her guns, and otherwise severely crippled.

"During the remainder of the winter the midshipmen of the squadron were sent to school to a Mr. Adams; and early in the spring the squadron went to New York, where some of the ships underwent repairs."

The long-expected war with Great Britain was close at hand. Notwithstanding the fact that the right to search our vessels-of-war had been explicitly disavowed by her after the unhappy *Chesapeake* affair of 1807, Great Britain showed a deference more and more scant toward the neutral rights of a power so obviously feeble as was the United States; and the bonds of peace so long strained were ready to break. The ships of the United States navy, that was so shortly to acquire a glory before unknown to our modest naval annals, came ignominiously near to being ordered out of commission and prevented from taking any part in the war; but at the last moment bolder and better counsels pre-

vailed, and early in the month of June, 1812, a small squadron was brought together in New York Harbor. It consisted of the *President*, 44, under the command of Commodore Rodgers; the *Essex*, 32, Captain Porter; and the *Hornet*, 18, Captain Lawrence. The rest of the little navy was scattered along the coast, under repairs or fitting out for sea.

War was declared between the United States and Great Britain on the 18th of June, 1812. On the 21st the frigates *United States*, 44, under the command of Captain Decatur, the *Congress*, 38, under the command of Captain Smith, and the brig *Argus*, 16, Lieutenant Commander St. Clair, joined the squadron and set sail. The *Essex* left the harbor some weeks later, having had to overhaul her rigging and restow her hold.

Captain Porter, as soon as he had put the highlands behind him, headed for the Banks of Newfoundland, where he

had numerous adventures and captured several prizes, among them the British sloop-of-war *Alert*, the first armed vessel to fall into the hands of the American navy. On one occasion, by a ruse, he succeeded in passing the line-of-battle-ship *Antelope* in a fog, though near enough to "smell her," as a sailor would say, which, by the by, in those days, was more than a figure of speech.

On another occasion Porter cut out from a fleet of transports an armed barque, upon which he found many soldiers and some general officers. The vessel convoying this fleet was the *Minerva*, and she deliberately refused to engage the *Essex*, although the anxiety of the latter to bring her to action was evident.

Owing to the crowded condition of the ship, Captain Porter was compelled to make a cartel of the *Alert*, and despatched the captured officers and men to Halifax under parole.

Turning to the southward, off the coast of Long Island, Porter ran across two British frigates and a brig that proved afterward to have been the *Acosta*, *Shannon*, and *Ringdove*. As the *Essex* had the weather-gauge, they endeavored to decoy her into gunshot. Failing in this, they set out in chase of her; but she outran them all. Captain Porter entered the Delaware, sailing up to New Castle and thence to Chester, where he overhauled his ship once more before putting to sea.

While lying there at anchor, a message was brought to him by a little vessel which the British had allowed to proceed in shore. It was from Sir James Yeo of the frigate *Southampton*, — nothing short of a challenge to a conflict off the Capes. After presenting his compliments in the usual stilted fashion of the day, Sir James's spleen evidently got the better of him; for he wrote that he would "be glad to have

a *tête-à-tête* anywhere between the Capes of Delaware and Havana,'' when he would have the pleasure of breaking his own sword over his (Porter's) ''d—d head'' and put him ''forward in irons.'' Porter replied that he accepted with pleasure Sir James's polite invitation, and would prefer to meet him off the Delaware Capes, where ''Captain Porter pledges his honor that no other American vessel shall interrupt the *tête-à-tête.* The *Essex* may be known,'' goes on Captain Porter, ''by a flag bearing the motto of 'Free Trade and Sailors' Rights!' and, when that is struck to the *Southampton,* Captain P. will deserve the treatment promised by Sir James.'' In writing of this incident, Farragut says, ''We put to sea immediately, but could not find Sir James.''

The *Essex* finally sailed from the Delaware under orders to join Commodore Bainbridge, then cruising off the coast

of Brazil in the *Constitution* in company with the sloop-of-war *Hornet*, under command of James Lawrence. Several rendezvous were appointed; but, owing to the *Constitution* having captured the *Java*, and the *Hornet* having captured the *Peacock*, the meeting did not take place at any of the appointed harbors, and Captain Porter was left to choose his own sailing-grounds.

A bold idea entered his head. It was nothing less than to sail around the Horn into the Pacific, and carry destruction to the British shipping in the Western waters. He would of course have no base of supplies, would be cut off from all help and assistance; but such a venture tempted his spirit greatly. The *Essex* received a severe buffeting in the icy waters of the Straits of Magellan, but she succeeded at last in working her way up the coast of South America.

The history of the eventful cruise that followed would make a separate volume. It has been told delightfully by Captain Porter himself in the book entitled "Porter's Narrative," the first edition of which was suppressed by the United States government, owing to the too familiar and detailed description of some unlicensed portion of a sailor's life in the Pacific Isles.

David Farragut, although of such tender years, already began to display some of the marks of his future greatness. He was ever willing, eager, and trustworthy. Upon one occasion he was made prize-master of the captured vessel *Barclay*, and sailed and all but navigated her for three weeks without assistance. At this time he was but twelve years of age. It seems hardly possible, as we think of it, that such responsibility could have been placed in the hands of a little boy; but Captain Porter had not judged amiss. Farragut was a

man in all but years, stature, and experience.

In the space of a few months Porter captured vessel after vessel, until he had more prizes than he could man. They all were lying in the harbor of one of the Marquesas Islands, the beautiful Nukahiva. Among the nine vessels in the squadron were the *Atlantic*, which had been armed and equipped as a consort of the flagship and renamed the *Essex Junior*, the *New Zealand*, the *Seringapatan*, and the *Sir Andrew Hammond*. The prisoners outnumbered the crew on the *Essex*, there were not enough officers to take charge of the vessels, and it was with great reluctance that Captain Porter was forced to sail away, leaving a force of marines in command of a lieutenant, and a battery commanding the harbor that had been named Massachusetts Bay.

On the 9th of December, 1813, the *Essex*, accompanied by the *Essex Jun-*

ior, under Commander Downes, sailed for Valparaiso, Chile. An interesting episode, which might be touched upon before leaving this part of the subject, is the fact that, during the stay at Nukahiva, Porter had taken sides with one of the tribes that were then at war in the interior of the islands, and had settled the conflict for good and all with the aid of his bullets and powder. This side-show warfare had given the sailors some employment; but Farragut was forbidden to take part in the expeditions of the land forces, for the reason, as he expressed it afterward, that his "legs were too short to climb the mountains."

Early in January of the year 1814 they arrived off the coast of Chile and finally came to anchor at Valparaiso, whence the *Essex* was doomed to depart under another flag. The action that brought us so much glory, and which gave the watchword, "Remem-

ber the *Essex*" to our navy, is so well described in Admiral Farragut's own words that it is well to quote verbatim, without further preamble.

"After looking into Concepcion, we ran down to Valparaiso, where we lay until the arrival of the British frigate *Phœbe* and sloop-of-war *Cherub*. This occurred early in February. The frigate mounted thirty long eighteen-pounders, sixteen thirty-two-pounder carronades, one howitzer, and six three-pounders in the tops, with a crew of three hundred and twenty men. The *Cherub* had eighteen thirty-two-pounder carronades, eight twenty-four-pounders, two long nines, and a crew of one hundred and eighty men.

"When they made their appearance off the port, our whole watch, being a third of our crew, were on the shore on liberty. The mate of an English merchantman, which was lying in port at the time, went immediately on board

the *Phœbe* and stated to Captain Hillyar that one-half of our men were on shore, and that the *Essex* would fall an easy prey. The two ships then hauled into the harbor on a wind. The *Phœbe* made our larboard quarter, but the *Cherub* fell to leeward about half a mile. On gaining our quarter, the *Phœbe* put her helm down, and luffed up on our starboard bow, coming within ten or fifteen feet of the *Essex*.

"I should say here that, as soon as the enemy hove in sight, we fired a gun and hoisted a cornet for 'all boats and men to return,' and that in fifteen minutes every man was at his quarters, and but one was under the influence of liquor, he a mere boy. When the *Phœbe*, as before mentioned, was close alongside, and all hands at quarters, the powder-boys stationed with slow matches ready to discharge the guns, the boarders, cutlass in hand, standing by to board in the smoke, as was

our custom at close quarters, the intoxicated youth saw, or imagined that he saw, through the port, some one on the *Phœbe* grinning at him. 'My fine fellow, I'll stop your making faces,' he exclaimed, and was just about to fire his gun, when Lieutenant McKnight saw the movement, and with a blow sprawled him on the deck. Had that gun been fired, I am convinced that the *Phœbe* would have been ours. But it was destined to be otherwise. We were all at quarters and cleared for action, waiting with breathless anxiety for the command from Captain Porter to board, when the English captain [Hillyar] appeared, standing on the after-gun, in a pea-jacket, and in plain hearing said,—

"'Captain Hillyar's compliments to Captain Porter, and hopes he is well.'

"Porter replied, 'Very well, I thank you; but I hope you will not come too near, for fear some accident might take place which would be disagreeable to

you.' And with a wave of his trumpet the kedge anchors went up to our yard-arms, ready to grapple the enemy.

"Captain Hillyar braced back his yards, and remarked to Porter that, if he did fall aboard him, he begged to assure the captain it would be entirely accidental.

"'Well,' said Porter, 'you have no business where you are. *If you touch a rope-yarn of this ship, I shall board instantly.*' He then hailed the *Essex Junior*, and told Captain Downes to be prepared to repel the enemy.

"But our desire for a fight was not yet to be gratified. The *Phœbe* backed down, her yards passed over ours, not touching a rope, and she anchored about half a mile astern. We thus lost an opportunity of taking her, though we had observed the strict neutrality of the port under very aggravating circumstances.

"We remained together in the harbor

for some days, when the British vessels, having completed their provisioning and watering, went to sea, and commenced a regular blockade of our ships. One night we manned all our boats for the purpose of boarding the enemy outside. The captain, in his boat, with muffled oars, pulled so close up to the *Phœbe* that he could hear the conversation of the men in the forecastle, and thereby learned that they were lying at their quarters prepared for us. So the attempt was given up, and we returned on board.

"It was understood in our ship one day that Captain Porter had sent word to Captain Hillyar that, if he would send the *Cherub* to the leeward point of the harbor, he would go out and fight him. We all believed the terms would be accepted, and everything was kept in readiness to get under way. Soon after the *Phœbe* was seen standing in with her motto flag flying, on which was 'God

and our Country! British Sailors' Best Rights!' This was in answer to Porter's flag, 'Free Trade and Sailors' Rights!' She fired a gun to windward, and the *Cherub* was seen running to leeward. In five minutes our anchor was up, and under topsails and jib we cleared for action. In fact, we were always ready for that. When within two miles of our position, the *Phœbe* bore up, and set her studdingsails. This I considered a second breach of faith on the part of Hillyar; for by his manœuvres in both instances it was evident that he was either wanting in courage or lacked the good faith of a high-toned, chivalrous spirit to carry out his original intention. However, as Captain Hillyar subsequently proved himself a brave man in more than one instance, I shall not deny him that common characteristic of a naval officer, and have attributed his action on these two occasions to a want of good faith. He was dealing with a

far inferior force; and it was ignoble, in the extreme, on his part, not to meet his foe, when he had the ghost of an excuse for doing so, ship to ship.

"On the 28th of March, 1814, it came on to blow from the south; and we parted our larboard cable, dragging the starboard anchor leeward. We immediately got under way, and made sail on the ship. The enemy's vessels were close in with the weathermost point of the bay; but Captain Porter thought we could weather them, so we hauled up for that purpose and took in our topgallant sails, which had been set over close-reefed topsails. But scarcely had the topgallant sails been clewed down, when a squall struck the ship, and, though the topsail halyards were let go, the yards jammed, and would not come down. When the ship was nearly gunwale under, the maintopmast went by the board, carrying the men who were on the main topgallant yard into

the sea; and they were drowned. We immediately wore ship, and attempted to regain the harbor, but, owing to the disaster, were unable to do so. Therefore, we anchored in a small bay about a quarter of a mile off shore and three-quarters of a mile from a small battery.

"But it was evident from the preparations being made by the enemy that he intended to attack us. So we made arrangements to receive him as well as we possibly could. Springs were got on our cables, and the ship was perfectly prepared for action.

"I well remember the feelings of awe produced in me by the approach of the hostile ships. Even to my young mind it was perceptible in the faces of those around me, as clearly as possible, that our case was hopeless. It was equally apparent that all were ready to die at their guns rather than surrender, and such I believe to have been the determination of the crew almost to a man.

There had been so much bantering of each other between the men of the ships through the medium of letters and songs, with an invariable fight between the boats' crews when they met on shore, that a very hostile sentiment was engendered. Our flags were flying from every mast; and the enemy's vessels displayed their ensigns, jacks, and motto flags as they bore down grandly to the attack.

"At 3.54 P.M. they commenced firing, the *Phœbe* under our stern and the *Cherub* on our starboard bow. But the latter, finding out pretty soon that we had too many guns bearing on her, likewise ran under our stern. We succeeded in getting three long guns out of the stern ports, and kept up as well-directed a fire as possible in such an unequal contest.

"In half an hour they were both compelled to haul off to repair damages. During this period of the fight we had succeeded three times in getting

springs on our cables, but in each instance they were shot away as soon as they were hauled taut. Notwithstanding the incessant firing from both of the enemy's ships, we had so far suffered less than might have been expected, considering that we could bring but three guns to oppose two broadsides. We had many men killed in the first five or ten minutes of their fire, before we could bring our stern guns to bear.

"The enemy soon repaired damages, and renewed the attack, both ships taking positions on our larboard quarter, out of reach of our carronades and where the stern guns could not be brought to bear. They then kept up a most galling fire, which we were powerless to return. At this juncture the captain ordered the cable to be cut; and, after many ineffectual attempts, we succeeded in getting sail on the ship, having found that the flying-jib halyards were in condition to hoist that sail. It

was the only serviceable rope that had not been shot away. By this means we were enabled to close with the enemy, and the firing now became fearful on both sides.

"The *Cherub* was compelled to haul out, and never came into close action again, though she lay off and used her long guns greatly to our discomfort, making a perfect target of us. The *Phœbe*, also, was enabled by the better condition of her sails to choose her own distance, suitable for her long guns, and kept up a most destructive fire on our helpless ship.

"'Finding,' as Captain Porter says, 'the impossibility of closing with the *Phœbe*, he determined to run his ship ashore and destroy her. We accordingly stood for the land; but, when we were within half a mile of the bluffs, the wind suddenly shifted, took us flat aback, and paid our head off shore. We were thus again exposed to a galling fire

from the *Phœbe*. At this moment Captain Downes of the *Essex Junior*, came on board to receive his orders, being under the impression that our ship would be soon captured, as the enemy at that time were raking us, while we could not bring a gun to bear, and his vessel was in no condition to be of service to us.

"Captain Porter now ordered a hawser to be bent on the anchor and let go. This brought our ship's head around, and we were in hopes the *Phœbe* would drift out of gunshot, as the sea was nearly calm; but the hawser broke, and we were again at the mercy of the enemy. The ship was now reported to be on fire, and the men came rushing up from below, many with their clothes burning, which were torn from them as quickly as possible; and those for whom this could not be done were told to jump overboard, and quench the flames. Many of the crew, and even some of the officers, hearing the order to jump overboard, took it

for granted that the fire had reached the magazine, and that the ship was about to blow up. So they leaped into the water, and attempted to reach the shore, about three-quarters of a mile distant, in which effort a number were drowned.

"The captain sent for the commissioned officers, to consult with them as to the propriety of further resistance, but first went below to ascertain the quantity of powder in the magazine. On his return to the deck he met Lieutenant McKnight, the only commissioned officer left on duty, all the others having been either killed or wounded. As it was pretty evident that the ship was in a sinking condition, it was determined to surrender, in order to save the wounded; and at 6.30 P.M. the painful order was given to haul down the colors.

"The loss of the *Essex* in this famous action was fifty-eight killed (including those who soon died), sixty-six wounded, and thirty-one missing.

Most of the missing were probably drowned. Captain Hillyar's official report acknowledged a loss of four killed and seven wounded on the *Phœbe*, and one killed and three wounded on the *Cherub*. The *Phœbe* received eighteen twelve-pound shots below the water line, and both the British ships were considerably cut up. It was estimated that they threw seven hundred eighteen-pound shots at the *Essex*, and that the latter fired each of her twelve long guns seventy-five times. The battle lasted two hours and a half, and was witnessed by thousands of people from the shore."

With characteristic modesty Farragut has dwelt but little upon the part that he played in the action. He does not mention the fact that he was wounded, but the record shows that he received a slight wound in the height of the engagement.

One small incident of the action shows

what Captain Porter thought of the little midshipman, and how he depended upon him as upon a grown man. A quarter-gunner, named Roach, was the *Essex's* only coward. He had deserted his gun after the last spring had been shot away, and word was brought to Captain Porter on the quarter-deck. Turning to Farragut, the captain drew a pistol from his belt, and, extending it, said, "Go below, Mr. Farragut, find this man, and do your duty." The midshipman did not flinch, but made his way down among the wounded, searching and inquiring everywhere for Roach; and, had he found him, it is safe to state that the quarter-gunner would have received his just deserts. However, he could not be found. While he was searching in the hold, Farragut ran across another man crawling along by the aid of his arms alone, both legs being mangled below the knees. In his hands he carried a huge boarding pistol.

His quest was the same as Farragut's. It was McCall, captain of the next gun to Roach's.

After the surrender, Farragut was ordered with the other prisoners on board the *Phœbe;* and he had not been there an hour before he was fighting again. This time it was at fisticuffs with an English middy over the possession of the *Essex's* pet pig. It is satisfactory to record that both the fight and the pig were won by the little Yankee.

"After some delay, arrangements were made to turn the *Essex Junior* into a cartel. She was disarmed, and all hands were embarked on her for home. In due time they arrived off the shores of Long Island, where they were stopped by the British razee *Saturn*, under the command of Captain Nash, and were detained. Porter, angry at the lack of respect shown to himself and to Captain Hillyar's parole, called away a boat, and succeeded on a foggy night in reaching

the shores of Long Island. At last the *Essex Junior*, was allowed to proceed, but was stopped again by the frigate *Narcissus*, which shows how complete a blockade the British had established along our coast.

The next morning, the 7th of July, 1814, the *Essex Junior* dropped her anchor in New York Harbor, and the officers and men set foot on their native land.

"Thus," says Farragut, "ended one of the most eventful cruises of my life."

II.

It must have been with great regret that, in reporting this action, the Secretary of the Navy felt himself compelled to write, "Midshipman Farragut is too young for promotion." It would have seemed, indeed, rather preposterous to think of a lieutenant, five feet in height and but twelve years old, with a huge epaulet on his shoulder, dining in the ward-room with grown men and grizzled veterans, while boys of his own age, in roundabouts and tasselled caps, were playing at marbles and peg-tops on shore. So the little midshipman, still on parole, was taken to Chester by Captain Porter, and put to school again.

On the 30th of November 1819, Farragut was officially notified of his exchange, and at the same time received orders to the brig *Spark*, Captain Thomas Gamble, then fitting out at New York. He was quartered on the sloop-of-war

John Adams, then doing duty as a receiving-ship; and, before he could join his ship, peace was proclaimed between the United States and Great Britain.

In April, 1815, he received orders to the *Independence*, 74, Captain Bainbridge, then lying at Boston and making preparations to sail with a squadron to the Mediterranean, as war had been declared by our government against Algiers. In company with the *Congress* and the *Erie*, the *Independence* sailed, but arrived too late to enable Farragut to see active service in the war. Commodore Decatur had already thrashed the pirates into submission, and had made peace.

It is interesting to note that Midshipman Farragut served with the largest American fleet ever assembled in British waters — a fleet that, under the direction of Commodore Bainbridge, had been brought to as great a state of perfection as was possible in the old sailing days.

Fleet sailing and the use of signals were Commodore Bainbridge's hobbies. There was plenty of time for the exercise of both. The names of the vessels under his command were as follows: *Independence*, 74; *Congress*, 36; *Erie*, 22; *Macedonian*, 36; *Ontario*, 22; *Chippewa*, 16; *Boxer*, 16; *Spark*, 12; *Epervier*, 16; *Enterprise*, 12; *Flambeau*, 12; *Torch*, 12; *Firefly*, 14; *Spitfire*, 12; and *Lynx* 8,—15 vessels, 320 guns. Six of the fleet had been captured from the British or were named after prizes.

After Farragut's return to America in the fall, everything went smoothly and evenly for a year or two. He made three other cruises of considerable interest to him, but of little moment otherwise; and in the spring of 1819 he was once more in the Mediterranean in the frigate *Franklin* and was appointed from her to be the acting lieutenant of the brig *Shark*. In referring to this promotion, which took place while

he was yet very young, Farragut writes: "One of the important events of my life was obtaining an acting lieutenancy when but little over eighten years of age. This caused me to feel that I was now associated with men, on an equality, and must act with more circumspection. When I became first lieutenant, my duties were still more important; for, in truth, I was really commander of the vessel, and yet I was not responsible—an anomalous position, which has spoiled some of our best officers. I consider it a great advantage to obtain command young, having observed, as a general thing, that persons who come into authority late in life shrink from responsibility, and often break down under its weight."

In 1822 Farragut was ordered to sea in the sloop-of-war, *John Adams*, and during the ensuing cruise he gained a knowledge of the Gulf of Mexico and of the treacherous Gulf Coast that proved of infinite value in after years.

Early in the following year the young sailor was again outward bound on a cruise that proved one of stirring adventure and unusual hardship. He was assigned as lieutenant to the schooner *Greyhound*, one of the vessels of the mosquito fleet sent out to break up piracy in the West Indian seas. About the last of August, 1823, Farragut sailed back to the United States. The mission of the mosquito fleet had been accomplished.

On the 24th of September, 1823, David Glasgow Farragut married Susan C. Marchant, of Norfolk, Va. His wife, who was a very beautiful and accomplished woman, shortly afterward became a confirmed invalid. But during her lifetime she had from her husband all the devotion and care of a great heart and soul. In all his relations with her for sixteen years he showed the full measure of the tenderness which was characteristic of his domestic life in general.

In August, 1825, Farragut was commissioned first lieutenant, and was assigned to the frigate *Brandywine*, which had been designated to convey the Marquis de Lafayette back to France. For a dozen years or more from this time Farragut's life was that of the ordinary naval officer in time of peace, with the exception that by his constant and thorough application to detail he was gradually fitting himself for the first place in his profession. It was of course to his advantage that in 1838 he had the opportunity of witnessing the attack and capture of San Juan d'Ulloa by the French fleet under Admiral Baudin. In 1841 he was appointed executive officer of the line-of-battle-ship *Delaware*, and on the 27th of September he received his commission as commander. His first command by right of rank was the *Decatur*, then on the South American coast, whence he returned to Norfolk in February, 1843.

On the 26th of December of the same year, only a day less than three years after the death of his first wife, Commander Farragut married Miss Virginia Loyall, like Miss Marchant a lady of Norfolk. The issue of this marriage was one son, who is now living in New York.

Upon the breaking out of our war with Mexico, Farragut obtained, although with great difficulty, the command of the sloop-of-war *Saratoga*, and as promptly as was possible repaired to the scene of action. But he arrived there just too late, for Vera Cruz had surrendered to General Scott. Of all the service Farragut had seen in the navy, this cruise was the most mortifying. It amounted to nothing in the way of fighting; and it resulted in very unpleasant relations with his commanding officer and with the department, although Farragut was completely justified in the end.

It was not until 1851 that Farragut received his commission as captain. During his forty-one years of service in the navy he had sailed in almost every sea, and so improved his opportunities that not only was he one of the best officers on the navy list, so far as seamanship went, but he had also gained that general knowledge that comes to a close observer, and by study and application had become a proficient linguist.

Soon came the troublesome times that preceded the outbreak of the hostilities between the North and the South. Farragut had always claimed to be a Southerner. He was born in Tennessee, his early boyhood had been spent in Louisiana; and, having married in the South and hailing from Norfolk, it was expected that he would cast his lot with those who left the regular service and adhered to the fortunes of the Confederacy.

Many officers who had been supported in the service, and who had fought beneath the old flag disowned their allegiance to both, and tendered their swords to the cause of secession. But Farragut, beyond all doubt, thought of the time when he had stood on the quarter-deck of the *Essex*. The flag that flew from her peak was the only one he knew and recognized. The navy was his home. He had no near kinspeople in Virginia, it is true; but, even if he had, he would have resisted all inducements and temptations to turn against his country.

As he was living at Norfolk, and yet made no concealment of his views upon secession, he soon found that not only were his friends falling away from him, but that it would soon be unsafe for him to continue living in the neighborhood, and there openly to speak his mind. "Very well," he said, "I will go where I can live with such sentiments,"

and he hastened his preparations for departure.

Soon after the fall of Fort Sumter came the conspiracy to seize the Norfolk Navy Yard. The struggle was on, and the direful future was full before the nation. The day before the burning of the navy yard, which took place on the 19th of April, 1861, Farragut started northward. He stopped at Washington, but the government was in a bewildered condition. Those were the blank days of uncertainty and hesitation. No one knew which way a friend might turn. The authorities were at their wits' ends. Those who were eager to take the field of action at once, found that there was no place ready for them. Farragut was one of these. He was unattached and assigned to no command; and so he moved to New York City, and thence to Tarrytown on the Hudson.

The battle of Bull Run opened the eyes of the Washington administration

to the enormous extent of the task before them. The country had accepted the fact that it was plunged into civil war.

No longer was it to be an affair of months. Delays but increased the uncertainty, and determined action was needed. The West Gulf Blockading Squadron was organized to co-operate with the land forces that had been placed in command of Major-general Butler. It was a fortunate chance, or it may have been a God-directed guidance, that settled upon David Glasgow Farragut to head the expedition. Porter, his foster-brother, the son of his old guardian, had been chosen to take charge of the attached flotilla of twenty bomb-schooners; but it was not until the 20th of January, 1862, that he received his final orders. On the 3d of the following month, on the flagship *Hartford*, he set sail from Hampton Roads, and in seventeen days he ar-

rived at the place of rendezvous at Ship Island in the Gulf of Mexico.

Never before this time had any American naval commander the same task placed before him. It was not a siege that he was expected to lay against the coast-board cities, or a blockade of the ports of entry; nor was it expected that he would have to meet vessels in combat on the deep. His orders were to reduce and capture New Orleans. But, owing to the unprepared state of the Union forces, and the hesitation and difficulty experienced by the administration, the Confederates had found time to construct heavy batteries, besides forts that commanded the narrow reaches of the river. Every site of importance was guarded by armed men and guns. It is an old adage that one gun well mounted and protected on shore will offset the value of a ship's whole broadside, and nothing that took place in our recent war with Spain has proved

to the contrary. The gunners on land have a stable platform. They can choose their time and mark well their distance. The gun itself must be dismounted or destroyed before the efficiency of the battery is affected. With a ship, especially a wooden ship, it was a different matter. One lucky shot might put her out of action. She was a large target, comparatively speaking; and her men were protected by bulwarks that could be pierced through and through by heavy ordnance.

When the expedition set sail, its destination was a secret; but it was not kept so long. Soon the whole North knew of the matter, and at first there was much complaint of the delays which the fleet encountered before entering the Mississippi.

The upper portions of the river were held by Commodore, afterward Rear-Admiral, Foote. He had large forces of river-boats, makeshift ironclads, and

other converted craft, mounting guns of all kinds and calibres. But Farragut commanded a fleet composed of as fine vessels as were in existence in those days. Six steam frigates, sixteen gunboats, twenty-one mortar-vessels, and five smaller craft at last lay anchored off the shallow bar that guarded the entrance to the river.

The great steam frigate *Colorado*, under the command of Captain Bailey, drew too much water to cross the bar; and Farragut, in making out his plans, was reluctantly compelled to leave her behind him. It was with difficulty that the *Mississippi* and *Pensacola* were forced across, and even the *Hartford* had but little margin to spare. Every detail of this preliminary work was supervised by the Flag Officer himself. Nothing was too slight to escape his notice. As dash and daring won the way for him in many cases afterward, precision, care, and painstaking attention served him at the start.

At last, to his great satisfaction, all the vessels crossed over and anchored at the head of the Pass à L'Outre and the South-west Pass. Before them on both sides of the river the Confederate batteries showed plainly.

The first gun was fired on the 16th of March, and a heavy but rather ineffective cannonade was kept up during most of the day. It had been brought to the ears of the Flag Officer that the Confederates intended to set free fire-rafts to drift with the current down upon the Northern ships. About eleven o'clock on the 16th one was sighted, drifting slowly down, a mass of flame and smoke; but the only effect was to cause some of the vessels of the bombarding fleet to change their anchorage. Fortunately, the blazing mass held to the middle of the stream, and passed safely through the squadron. In order to be prepared against another such attack, Farragut had all the row-

boats of the fleet (over one hundred and fifty) supplied with grapples, rope, and buckets; and a systematic plan was made to dispose of any other fire-ship that should put in an appearance. That very night another one was sighted, even larger than the first. The steamer *Westfield* was signalled, and in obedience set out, and with full head of steam crashed bows on into the burning mass. At the same time the row-boats approached it, and, managing to get some lines on board, towed it ashore, where it burned away merrily, lighting the sky until early in the morning.

One of Farragut's mottoes was that "men trained to arms will always do their duty if ably led," and on this principle he acted during his whole career. No one ever flinched in following him.

For a week the bombardment was kept up steadily; but, though the gunners of the forts were often driven from

their guns, the works were not reduced. One thing that marked the great commander was the fact that, despite his assertion of individual authority, he was, unlike other leaders of whom history tells, open to suggestions from those who served under him ; and, when it was represented that supplies and ammunition would soon run short, a council of war was called on board the flagship. At the end of the conference orders were issued, the gist of which is contained in the following extract : —

"The Flag Officer, having heard all of the opinions expressed by the different commanders, is of the opinion whatever is to be done will have to be done quickly. . . . When, in the opinion of the Flag Officer, the propitious time has arrived, the signal will be made to weigh, and advance to the conflict. . . . He will make the signal for close action, No. 8, and abide the result, — conquer or be conquered."

His orders were to get to New Orleans, and he had determined to carry them out. Every device was employed during the following days to render the chances of success more favorable. Cables were slung over the sides of the vessels to protect their vulnerable parts, sand-bags, coal, hammocks, and splinter nettings were spread and rigged, and, as it was known that the attempt to run the forts would be made at night, no lights were to be allowed. Decks and gun-breeches were whitewashed, to make them more visible in the darkness. The orders issued at this time from the flagship took care of every little detail of the advance. Nothing seems to have been forgotten. The orders concluded with the following weighty sentence: "I shall expect the most prompt attention to signals and verbal orders either from myself or the captain of the fleet, who, it will be understood in all cases, acts by my authority."

The chain that weeks previously had been thrown across the river had been cut on the 24th of April. The 26th was the night appointed for the attempt; and two o'clock in the morning was the hour at which the signals flashed and were answered, the anchors weighed, and the vessels formed in line.

The attack was ordered to be made in three divisions. The first, led by Captain Bailey in the *Cayuga*, was further composed of the *Pensacola*, *Mississippi*, *Oneida*, *Varuna*, *Katahdin*, *Kineo*, and *Wissahickon;* the second, led by Farragut in the *Hartford*, of the *Brooklyn* and *Richmond;* the third, led by Captain Bell, of the *Scioto*, *Iroquois*, *Kennebec*, *Pinola*, *Itasca*, and *Winona*. The latter was to engage Fort Jackson, and the former St. Philip. Porter, with the *Harriet Lane*, *Westfield*, *Owasco*, *Miami*, *Clifton*, and *Jackson*, was to take up a position where he could pour in an enfilading fire while the fleet was passing

the forts. The fleet had hardly formed into line, when the enemy was aware of the movement, and signal lights flashed along the batteries.

The *Cayuga*, leading the first division, steamed silently up the river. Both shores became darting sheets of flame as the Confederate batteries opened with all their strength. The heavy guns of the fleet were now replying.

Never before had such furious cannonading taken place. Never before had such a weight of metal been exchanged in any conflict. All at once down the river came a blazing fire-ship, pushed forward by the rebel ram *Manassas*. Straight it bore for the *Hartford!* In order to avoid a collision, Farragut sheered off, and found himself aground immediately. Before he could work off the bank, the fire-ship was upon him. It seemed all up with the *Hartford;* and, in truth, nothing but strict disci-

pline saved her, for not a man left his post. The hose was manned, and streams of water turned on the flames that leaped up from the frigate's sides and flaunted in the rigging. Soon the powerful engines backed her off, but she was all ablaze. Nevertheless, the gunners of the starboard battery kept replying to the forts. The men detailed to fight the flames kept busily at work, and the fire was at last extinguished. Once more Farragut led his column up the river.

The Confederate fleet, composed of thirteen gunboats and two ironclad rams, made a formidable foe. But this naval action was something for which the men and officers had long been trained; and one vessel of the fleet, the *Varuna*, commanded by Commander Boggs, sank two of the enemy before she in turn was sunk.

At last, as day dawned, Farragut found himself above the forts; and he

counted fourteen out of the seventeen vessels that had started some hours before. The *Itasca*, the *Kennebec*, and *Winona* had been so mauled and confused that they were forced to turn back, and, as day came on, to return down the river. The *Kineo*, which had been in collision with the *Brooklyn*, and had twelve shot in her hull besides, had managed to fight her way through. The *Hartford*, *Cayuga*, and the *Varuna* had encountered the greatest dangers.

It seemed almost a miracle that so many vessels had managed to survive the awful storm of shot and shell that had been poured into them.

The day dawned warm and beautiful. Below, the stars and bars still floated above the forts; but they were harmless now, and out of range. Their usefulness in protecting the city was gone. They were no longer to be considered.

The seventeen vessels of the enemy

were all either wrecked or captured. In the Northern fleet the casualties amounted to one hundred and seventy-one. The loss of the enemy has never been stated.

Announcing his success in a letter to Porter, who was still below the batteries with the bomb-vessels, Farragut employed the following sentence, which is typical of the man. The bearer of the despatch was Captain Boggs, who, owing to the loss of his vessel, was now without command. He made his way in an open boat through the bayou, and reached Porter safely. Said the Flag Officer tersely, "We have had a rough time of it, as Boggs will tell you."

Before the fleet was able to come peacefully to anchor off the city, there was a small action with some batteries farther up the river at Englishtown; but these Farragut succeeded in silencing without delay.

Afterward, in writing of his ex-

perience during the passage of the lower forts, Farragut said: "Captain Wainwright and myself were hallooing ourselves hoarse at the men not to fire into our own ships. It was one of the most awful sights and events that I ever saw or experienced. The smoke was so dense that only now and then could you see the flash of the cannon, the fire-ships and rafts."

General Lovell, the Confederate commander of the land forces, had seen best to withdraw his troops from the city as soon as the fleet hove in sight; and he turned the government over once more to the former mayor, Monroe, who seems from all accounts to have been a very self-important personage, with a great sense of what is termed the "high-falutin." From him Farragut demanded the surrender of the city. The message was borne to the mayor by two officers, Captain Bailey and Lieutenant Perkins, who pushed their way afoot through the

angry mob, alone and unprotected. At every step threats were made against their lives. Farragut insisted that the stars and stripes should be displayed on the public buildings, that by noon of the following day it should appear on the City Hall, the Mint, and the Custom-house. The mayor's reply to this demand was a long-winded rigmarole, which, in the light of the circumstances and succeeding events, was most amusing. He condescended to pity Farragut for the thought that such a thing was possible. "Let me tell you," he wrote, "that the man lives not in our midst whose hand and heart would not be paralyzed at the mere thought of such an act, nor could I find in my entire constituency so wretched and desperate a renegade as would dare to profane with his hand this sacred emblem of our aspirations." Perhaps David Glasgow Farragut smiled, when he read this composition. At all events,

he did not waste time over the matter; for he immediately returned the following reply: —

"UNITED STATES FLAGSHIP 'HARTFORD,'
"AT ANCHOR OFF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS,
"April 28, 1862.

"*Sir*,— Your communication of the 26th instant has been received, together with that of the city council. I deeply regret to see . . . a determination . . . not to haul it [the State flag] down. Moreover, when my officers and men were sent on shore to communicate with the authorities and to hoist the United States flag on the Custom-house, they were insulted in the grossest manner; and the flag which had been hoisted by my orders on the Mint was pulled down and dragged through the streets. All of which goes to show that the fire of this fleet may be drawn upon the city at any moment, . . . and an amount of distress ensue to the innocent population

which I have heretofore endeavored to assure you that I desired by all means to avoid. The election is, therefore, with you; but it becomes my duty to notify you to remove the women and children from the city within forty-eight hours, if I have rightly understood your determination. Very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"D. G. FARRAGUT,

"*Flag Officer, Western Gulf Squadron.*"

"HIS HONOR THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS."

The individuality of the men crops out most strongly in their correspondence, and there can be no better insight into Farragut's heart than that to be obtained by a perusal of his letters and reports. Two days before he wrote to the mayor, the following general order had been sent out to the squadron:—

"UNITED STATES FLAGSHIP 'HARTFORD,'
"OFF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, April 26, 1862.

"GENERAL ORDER."

"Eleven o'clock this morning is the hour appointed for all the officers and crews of the fleet to return thanks to Almighty God for his great goodness and mercy in permitting us to pass through the events of the last two days with so little loss of life and blood. At that hour the church pennant will be hoisted on every vessel of the fleet, and their crews assembled will in humiliation and prayer make their acknowledgments therefor to the Great Dispenser of all human events.

"D. G. FARRAGUT,
"*Flag Officer, Western Gulf Blockading Squadron.*"

Not wishing to waste time by further parleying with Mayor Monroe, Farragut ordered Captain Morris of the marines

to take a small party ashore, and hoist the flag on the Mint. He did so, and left it flying without a guard, warning the angry spectators that the guns of the *Pensacola* would reply to any effort to displace it.

Shortly afterward the Flag Officer turned the control of New Orleans over to General Butler. There were plenty of fields for action further up the river. Vicksburg still commanded the channel, and prevented a junction with Foote.

One of the remarkable things that had been brought to light during the battle for the possession of the river was the fact that for the first time in modern warfare ramming tactics were employed. Farragut created a new departure when he gave orders for ramming the enemy's ironclads — formidable vessels, hastily constructed though they were — with the wooden prows of his own steamers. He speaks thus of these extemporized instru-

ments of offence, first employed by the rebels. "These rams are formidable things; but, when there is room to manœuvre, the heavy ships will *run over them.*" Then, referring to the affair of the *Merrimac* that had happened some time before, he adds, "The difficulty at Hampton Roads was that the ships were all at anchor and near shoal water."

One can imagine the breathless expectation with which the onlookers saw the old frigate *Mississippi* bearing down full speed on the Hollins ram *Manassas.* It may have been fortunate for the wooden frigate that the ram avoided her onslaught; and even Farragut writes of his great relief at seeing the *Manassas* drift by, a little later in the engagement, on fire from her own engines.

Farragut was now in his own country, — Louisiana, — familiar to him from the recollections of his boyhood; and of his feelings when he appeared there as the conqueror of his own people he writes

as follows: "It is a strange thought that I am here among my relatives, and yet not one has dared to say, 'I am happy to see you.' There is a reign of terror in this doomed city; but, although I am abused as one who wished to kill all the women and children, I still see a feeling of respect for me.''

After Butler had taken possession of the city, Farragut advanced up the river with his fleet. Baton Rouge was still unsubmissive. Its capture was important. So Captain Palmer was sent to demand the surrender of the city from the mayor. But, while negotiations were pending, Farragut himself put in an appearance, and took possession without more talk; and Palmer then went on up to Natchez under orders to take the place at once, while S. P. Lee proceeded to Vicksburg on the same mission. Antry, the Confederate leader then in command of the latter place, replied that the Mississippians did not

know how to surrender, and, if Farragut would teach them, he might come and try.

From the banks of the river, protected under the levees, the Confederates shielded themselves, and inflicted a constant annoyance upon the fleet by means of an irritating and deadly sharp-shooting and isolated firing, making use of every advantage of the natural intrenchment to pick off men and officers on board the ships. This caused Farragut to write the following letter to General Lovell, in reply to the accusation that he had employed his guns upon defenceless women and children : —

"United States Flagship 'Hartford,'
"Baton Rouge, June 17, 1862.

"*Sir*,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 12th inst., together with its enclosure, in which you are pleased to say that vengeance will be visited upon the wo-

men and children of Rodney if our vessels are fired upon from the town. Although I find no such language contained in the letter of Lieutenant Commanding Nichols, or even any from which such inference might be drawn, still I shall meet your general remark on your own terms. You say you locate your batteries at such points on the river as are deemed best suited, etc., without reference to the people of the towns, and claim no immunity for your troops. Now, therefore, the violation is with you. You choose your own time and place for the attack upon our defenceless people, and should therefore see that the innocent and defenceless of your own people are out of the way before you make the attack; for rest assured that the fire will be returned, and we will not hold ourselves answerable for the death of the innocent. If we have ever fired upon your 'women and children,' it was done here at Baton Rouge, when

an attempt was made to kill one of our officers landing in a small boat, manned with four boys. They were, in the act of landing, mostly wounded by the fire of some thirty or forty horsemen, who chivalrously galloped out of the town, leaving the women and children to bear the brunt of our vengeance. At Grand Gulf, also, our transports were fired upon in passing, which caused the place to be shelled, with what effect I know not; but I do know that the fate of a town is at all times in the hands of the military commandant, who may at pleasure draw the enemy's fire upon it, and the community is made to suffer for the act of its military.

"The only instance I have known where the language of your letter could possibly apply took place at New Orleans on the day we passed up in front of the city, while it was still in your possession, by your soldiers firing on the crowd. I trust, however, that the time

is past when women and children will be subjected by their military men to the horrors of war. It is enough for them to be subjected to the incidental inconveniences, privations, and sufferings.

"If any such things have occurred as the slaying of women and children or innocent people, I feel well assured that it was caused by the act of your military, and much against the will of our officers; for, as Lieutenant Commanding Nichols informs the mayor, we war not against defenceless persons, but against those in open rebellion against our country, and desire to limit our punishment to them, though it may not always be in our power to do so.

"Very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"D. G. FARRAGUT,

"*Flag Officer, Commanding Western Gulf Blockading Squadron.*

"MAJOR-GEN'L. MANSFIELD LOVELL, *Commanding Confederate troops, Jackson, Miss.*"

Farragut was now below Vicksburg, but his future movements were uncertain. He was confronted with more difficulties and threatened with more dangers than any naval commander before or since. The powers at Washington were apparently in doubt as to whether they should command him to proceed up the river and pass the city or to go down again to the open waters of the Gulf, and the opinions of his own officers were about in the same divided condition.

As we look back upon the state of mind of the great commander at this time, we not only marvel that he managed to maintain his health and strength under the strain and worry, but we see that his foresight and prophecy were ever clear and coherent.

Above the city and away up the Mississippi lay the specially constructed fleet of gunboats, under the command of Davis and of Foote,—vessels that had

been built to navigate in shallow waters and to cross the shifting bars. They drew but from six to eight feet of water, while the sea-going craft under Farragut drew from ten to sixteen feet. With their tall spars and great topsides, the latter must have looked strangely out of place, as they lay at anchor between the wooded banks. No vessels of their kind had ever been so far from the Delta; and the country people would flock to the shores to watch them, and occasionally, if they possessed an old musket or long-barrelled rifle, they would amuse themselves by taking pot-shots at any head that might appear above the bulwarks. The vessels were constantly running aground; and Farragut makes in a letter the following pithy statement: "It is a sad thing to think of leaving your ship on a mud-bank five hundred miles from the natural element of a sailor."

The river was falling, it was hard to

keep the vessels coaled and provisioned, and the uncertainty of a junction with the land forces and the conflicting orders from Washington were enough to send a man demented to his grave; but Farragut knew what he could accomplish, although apparently he stood alone.

If it was necessary to pass the city of Vicksburg, he perceived that the attempt should be made at once. Why it should have been considered necessary at this juncture, we cannot now, looking at it in the light of subsequent events, see. It was impossible to maintain the control of the river, at any important point, without land forces. Troops were needed successfully to reduce a city. Those on the transports, few in number, that accompanied him, could find but little foot-hold on the low flooded shores; and, as they were always forced to approach the enemy on his best guarded front, co-operation with the army was essential.

Up to this time another difficulty, from an entirely different source, had harassed the river squadron; and, odd to relate, it was something hundreds and hundreds of miles away,—it was the *Merrimac*. The fear of that one ironclad had seemed to divert the attention of the whole navy department to Hampton Roads; and the disaster that might follow the further success of the rebel monster drew every official mind. The whole seaboard was in a frightened condition. People were ready to believe that the *Merrimac* might at any time steam past Sandy Hook and reduce the city of New York. Even Boston was in a perturbation. When the little monitor had succeeded in driving her huge adversary back to the shelter of the land, this feeling had not abated; and it was not until the authentic news came that the famous ironclad had been destroyed that the country at large breathed easy. No one felt this relief

more than did Farragut, when he wrote: "It was well that the *Merrimac* was blown up, for I never would have had another vessel. Everything was seized for Hampton Roads, to look after the *Merrimac*. Thank God, she is gone! I hope now that they will send us a monitor. She would keep the river clear, and save thousands of lives, as well as the navy, which the river will use up."

When the orders came at last for clearing the river, Farragut was hot for starting at once; but his officers demurred. "My officers oppose my running by Vicksburg as impracticable," said he. "Only one supports me, so I must give up for the present. In ten days they will be of my opinion, and then the difficulties will be much greater than they are now." It turned out exactly as he said.

All sorts of reports were abroad about him,—statements that he had

been wounded, that he had lost both his legs, that he was ill with brain fever; and the gossips at Washington were indulging in all sorts of conjectures. But his splendid constitution had enabled him to live through enough to have killed men of tenderer fibre.

He was taking excellent care of the old *Hartford*,—"the hen" as he called her, of his "little flock of chickens." While he was at Warrenton, a few miles below Vicksburg, waiting for the mortar boats and gunboats to get into position, he wrote the following letter: "Here we are once more in front of Vicksburg, by a peremptory order of the department and the President of the United States, 'to clear the river through.' With God's assistance, I intend to try it as soon as the mortars are ready, which will be in an hour or two. The work is rough. Their batteries are beyond our reach on the heights. It must be done in the daytime, as the river is too

difficult to navigate by night. I trust that God will smile upon our efforts, as he has done before. I think more should have been left to my discretion; but I hope for the best, and pray God to protect our poor sailors from harm."

The plan of attack and general orders were issued on the 25th. Porter was ordered up with his flotilla to shell the heights. But it was not until the 28th that the gunboats were ready and the mortar-vessels armed with sufficient ammunition and in proper position. The guns at Vicksburg were known to be powerful and well placed. Farragut intended to test them without more ado. On the 28th of June, at four o'clock in the morning, the *Iroquois*, the *Oneida*, the *Richmond*, the *Wissahickon*, the *Scioto*, the *Hartford*, the *Winona*, the *Pinola*, the *Brooklyn*, and the *Kennebec* came up into range of the rebel fire in the order named. The *Iroquois* fired the first shot as the column moved up

stream, the *Richmond*, *Hartford*, and *Brooklyn* on the right forming the starboard column close under the batteries. At times, apparently, all the Confederate guns were directed on the flagship *Hartford*, as she moved with just sufficient speed to give her steerage way. As she drew near, she opened a frightful fire from her starboard broadside. The ground was high and the gunners on the bluffs had excellent protection. The whole ridge broke into flame. At the slowest possible speed the ships went on; and of this anxious moment, when opposite the city, feeling the full concussion of the cannonade, Farragut wrote that very morning: "The *Hartford* fired slowly and deliberately and with fine effect, far surpassing my expectations in reaching the summit batteries. The rebels were soon silenced by the combined efforts of the fleet and the flotilla, and at times did not reply at all. For several minutes I passed up at the

slowest speed, and even stopped once, in order that the *Brooklyn* and the sternmost vessels might close up." Every vessel succeeded in running the bend and joining Davis's fleet with the exception of the *Brooklyn*, *Katahdin*, and *Kennebec*, who failed to pass owing to a misunderstanding of the general orders. That night, in his cabin, Farragut concluded the letter he had begun before the action.

"Above Vicksburg, June 29.

"My last sheet was closed as a letter for my wife and boy, in the event of any accident happening to me in the fight which I knew was to come off in a few hours.

"There were difficulties in the way, and the mortars did not get their fuses right until it was too late for us to move against the town that evening. So I postponed it until the morning of the 27th. We were under way by two

A.M., and off Vicksburg by daylight. The scene soon became animated, as both parties were doing their best to destroy each other.

"We had no difficulty in driving them from their guns; but the batteries were so elevated that the gunners could lie down until we had poured in a broadside, and then run to their guns and reopen fire as each ship passed. They kept it up pretty well, though we fortunately received little injury. Occasionally a vessel was struck by a large shot. Wainwright's cabin was well cut to pieces, but we lost but one man killed and eleven wounded.

"I was in my favorite stand, the mizzen rigging, when all at once the captain of the gun on the poop-deck wished to fire at a battery which would require him to point his gun near me, and requested me to get down, which I did, to avoid the concussion. I was only a moment in doing so, when the whole

mizzen rigging was cut away just above my head! Although the shot would not have struck me, I would have tumbled on deck. But, thank God, I escaped with only a touch on the head, which did not break the skin, and has not given me a thought since. This same shot cut the halyards that hoisted my flag, which dropped to half-mast without being perceived by us. This circumstance caused the other vessels to think that I was killed.

"It seems to me that any man of common sense would know that this place cannot be taken by ships, when the army in its rear consists of ten thousand or fifteen thousand men, and they don't care about sacrificing the city. We did not attempt particularly to destroy the city. It was more important to fire at the batteries. The soldiers have no interest in preserving it, as they know it is only a matter of time for it to fall into our hands. As soon as General Hal-

leck sends the soldiers to occupy it by land, we will drive them out of the forts.

"To-day is Sunday, and we had prayers at eleven o'clock. I signalled the fleet to return thanks to Almighty God for his mercies."

On July 1, Commodore Charles H. Davis came down the river from Memphis, and the Mississippi flotilla at last joined the Gulf fleet.

Farragut had already reported to the government at Washington that the forts could be passed, and had proved that he could do it; but he also urged the necessity of attacking from the rear, before Vicksburg could be taken. At last, to his great delight, he received an order, dated May 22, from Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, which ordered him to send the mortar batteries in advance, and to proceed to the reduction of Mobile. In answering this, Farragut represented that the mortar-vessels, unless protected by strong armed guards,

were practically at the mercy of the rebel rams. One of the latter was even then blockaded in the Yazoo River. This was the *Arkansas*. She was not blockaded long, however; for on the 15th of July, before daylight, she dashed out of the river, and ran the gauntlet of the vessels of both squadrons, and anchored safely under the guns of Vicksburg. She had sustained some rough handling before she arrived at her haven of refuge, which she did in a crippled condition. Farragut felt great chagrin at the mere fact that she had managed to elude him. Several attempts were made to disable her further, but none were successful.

After the commander of the Gulf fleet reached New Orleans again, he had remained there but a week, when the news was brought him that assistance was needed at Baton Rouge, where a few thousand Federal troops were occupying the abandoned earthworks of

the Confederates. They were under the command of General Williams, who lost his life in the defence of his position on August 5. The *Arkansas* left Vicksburg on the 3d, under cover of night, to assist in the taking of the Yankee fortifications at Baton Rouge. But a short distance below Vicksburg her machinery gave way; and upon the appearance of the U.S.S. *Essex*, her commander set her on fire and ran her ashore, where she blew up. The story of her end quickly spread abroad.

Farragut reported to the department, stating his pleasure at sending on this news. "It is the happiest moment of my life," he writes, "that I am able to inform the department of the destruction of the ram *Arkansas*. Not because I held the ironclad in such terror, but because the community did." And then, in writing a private letter on about the same date, he expressed himself thus: "My last trip up the Mississippi was a

fruitless one; but it was well done, because it showed the enemy that we were prompt and always ready to be upon them with a sharp stick. I received the news in the middle of the night, and at daylight was off in the *Hartford* for Baton Rouge, after the *Arkansas*. I had told the secretary that I did not believe she would ever leave the forts at Vicksburg, but that, if she did, she was *mine*. Before I got there, she was blown up. My delight would have been to smash her in *Hartford* style, but I would have been just as well pleased for Bell to have done it: he would have done it just as well. Although Bill Porter did not destroy her, he was the cause and thought his shells did the work; for they would have hardly destroyed her unless he had made the attack. I insist that Porter is entitled to the credit of it. He said to his officers, 'That fellow keeps me uneasy; and, after I get my breakfast to-morrow, I

will go up and destroy him.' And he did, to the best of his ability."

On the 12th of August, Farragut received his commission as rear-admiral, dated July 16, 1862, together with the thanks of Congress, which he had so richly deserved.

Previous to this time, early in July, Porter had been ordered home to take charge of an important commission; and thus Farragut lost the services of the man on whom he depended more than any other. Soon he left the river, and anchored at Pensacola, where he heard of strange things the Confederates were doing for the defence of Mobile.

Farragut's contempt for rams and rumors was unbounded. Upon one occasion he spoke as follows: "I certainly believe very little that comes in the shape of reports. . . . I mean to be whipped or to whip my enemy, and not to be scared to death." Upon another occasion he said, in writing to his family:

"Don't believe a word about the rams. There is nothing here that my gunboats cannot whip." And, in the general orders issued before an attack, he makes the following statement in the form of advice to the officers who expected to serve with him: "Let it be your pride to show the world that danger has no greater terrors for you in one form than in another; that you are as ready to meet the enemy in one shape as in another; that you have never, in your wooden ships, been alarmed by fire-rafts, torpedoes, chains, batteries, iron-clad rams, gunboats, or forts. The same Great Power preserves you in the presence of them all."

In order to recuperate the health of his crew and prepare for the coming conflict, he took time and pains in attending to every detail, and gave his hard-worked men as much liberty as possible.

During the early part of the month

of September the weather was delightful, and everything went swimmingly. A few extracts from his letters written at about this date show not only Farragut's frame of mind, but his mental attitude toward life. He writes on September 3: "The health of myself and all on board is excellent, the temperature is delightful, and my crew are getting back to their accustomed tone. I received letters from the department by this mail, entirely different from the last. They talk about my 'wisdom,' 'judgment,' etc.; but, when the *Arkansas* was at Vicksburg, I was 'to destroy her at all hazards.' I would have given my admiral's commission to have gotten up to the *Arkansas*. I wanted a wooden ship to do it. The ironclads are cowardly things, and I don't want them to succeed in the world."

"On September 21.

"As to prize money, I never count

upon it. If any comes, well and good. But I am not so anxious to make money as I am to put an end to this horrid war. . . .

"You can't imagine what a time I have of it to keep some of the officers from going home, as they say, 'only for a week'; but they hope that, when they get North, they may be relieved. But I won't let them go unless on medical survey. They complain. But I tell them it is of no use, we must all do our duty, and, when that is completed, we can *all* go home."

Farragut could hardly sleep at night, he testifies, by reason of the constant turn of his thought to Mobile. He did not care how much the enemy knew of his plans to close up that port, saying to himself that the only thing he would keep secret was "the day he would do so."

The most careful plans were laid at

this very time; and they were the same, practically, that were afterward carried out to the letter. He knew that the Confederates were constantly making the batteries and forts at Mobile Bay stronger, and he was also informed that they were constructing rams under the direction of his old friend and shipmate, Commodore Buchanan, for whose ability he had much respect. But he never doubted.

Reports at this time from the Mississippi caused a change in his designs. The Confederates had been extremely active at Vicksburg and up the river at Port Hudson. They seemed to recognize that, if they did not show a stronger force on the river and prevent a free passage between the loyal States northward and the Gulf, they would be subject to rear attacks and constant harassments. At all costs they determined to close the Mississippi. The authorities at Washington made note of it.

In November we find Farragut once more on board his old flagship, the *Hartford*, off New Orleans. The stream was low,—too low, indeed, for an immediate start; and he was forced to wait until he could have sufficient draught beneath his vessel's keel. Blockading was hard service. The delay was debilitating, and before long he was actually "spoiling for a fight."

Upon the arrival of General Banks, who superseded General Butler, Baton Rouge was occupied, under Farragut's advice; and thus a base of operations was secured against the time when the river would be high enough to proceed to Port Hudson.

Two events that happened at this juncture, cast a gloom over Farragut's mind. One was the recapture of the city of Galveston, the other was the loss of the U.S.S. *Hatteras*, which was sunk by the Confederate steamer *Alabama*. Had it not been for the fact that the

work in hand demanded all his attention, Farragut would have started for the coast of Texas. In fact, one morning he got under way in order to run out into the Gulf, and found himself aground in the South West Pass. So badly did he fetch up on the bar that the *Hartford* was in actual danger of leaving her bones there. Galveston was never retaken.

Port Hudson, fifteen miles above Baton Rouge, was now the objective point of operations on the Mississippi. Banks had been persuaded to join in the enterprise, and to detach troops to make demonstrations in the rear; and everything was in readiness for the fleet to make the attempt to pass the batteries.

It was a more difficult undertaking than that of passing Vicksburg, toward which Grant had been working his way. The flagship was accompanied by the *Richmond*, armed with twenty six, eight, and nine inch Columbiads, the *Missis-*

sippi with twenty-one, the *Monongahela* with sixteen heavy guns, and the gunboats *Albatross*, *Kineo*, *Sachem*, and *Genessee* each carrying three Columbiads and two rifled thirty-two-pounders. The *Mississippi* was the only side-wheeler in the fleet.

On the 14th of April all the fleet were anchored just out of the range of the Confederate guns. That night the *Hartford* displayed the signal to advance, and, with the *Albatross*, lashed to her side, led the line, followed by the *Richmond* lashed to the *Genessee*, and the *Monongahela* with the *Kineo*. Last came the *Mississippi* and the *Sachem*. There were nearly four miles of batteries along the banks, rising line above line, like a ship's broadsides. No sooner had the vessels hove in sight than signal lights flashed and bonfires blazed on the heights and close to the water's edge, throwing their red dancing lights the width of the rippling stream. It was a

frightful sight,—the zone of fire of those concentrated forts. Silently the vessels went ahead, but it was not long before they were all replying to the cannonade that greeted them. The guns of their starboard batteries were fired as rapidly as they could be loaded. There was no breeze stirring, and the smoke soon discounted the lights that had been lit on shore; but through the choking mists the vessels held their way. The mortar batteries below now had the range, and the sky was seamed with the fiery trails of burning fuses. Pilots were stationed in the mizzen rigging, where they could talk with those at the wheels, forward lookouts were stationed, and the lead was kept going from both bows and stern. Once the speed of the *Hartford* had to be checked, owing to the thickness of the smoke; and it was just in time, for it was discovered that she was heading straight inshore. For an hour and a half the combat lasted, until

word came down from Pilot Carrell that they had passed the forts and had turned the bend of the river. Then Farragut found that, excepting for the presence of his little consort, the *Albatross*, he was alone. None of the other vessels had succeeded in getting by. For a long time he could hear the sounds of the fight below, and mightily must his spirit have been tempted to turn about and once more enter the thick of it; but he resisted this temptation, knowing that even the presence above the forts of the two vessels that had been successful, would help to defeat the purposes of the enemy, who were using the Red River as the highway for supporting their land forces, and as a port of refuge and a ship-yard for building their rams and gunboats.

During the night the *Albatross* had a narrow escape. She had anchored up stream, some distance above the *Hartford*, and after midnight she drifted

down the river, and was mistaken for a ram. The guns of the *Hartford* were trained upon her, and only the timely answer to a hail saved her from destruction.

One thing Farragut had witnessed with the greatest anguish. It was the burning of the great *Mississippi*. She had grounded opposite the forts, and had been set on fire. Further than that fact he knew nothing at the time. He could not tell how it had fared with the rest of his fleet. There was no way of communicating with them, and he was forced to report — with his usual honesty — that the passage of Port Hudson had been "a disaster." It was not until later, when the reason for the failure of the other vessels to get by was made known, that the disaster proved not to have been so great as he at first assumed.

When all the reports of the various commanders of the fleets were admitted, it was seen that they had but met with

the reverses and evil chances incident to the game of war, whenever and wherever played.

In the light of some of the happenings in the recent war with Spain, it is interesting to take an extract from the official report of Captain Smith, of the *Mississippi*, who explains graphically and reasonably the loss of his command. "I consider that I should be neglecting a most important duty," writes Captain Smith, "should I omit to mention the coolness of my executive officer, Mr. Dewey, and the steady, fearless, and gallant manner in which the officers and men of the *Mississippi* defended her, and the orderly and quiet manner in which she was abandoned after being thirty-five minutes aground under the fire of the enemy's batteries. There was no confusion in embarking the crew; and the only noise was from the enemy's cannon, which did not cease until some time after the ship was en-

veloped in flames and the boats had passed out of the range of their guns." This executive officer was George Dewey, admiral of the United States Navy.

Under the date of April 2d, 1863, the Secretary of the Navy wrote to Admiral Farragut, after receiving the combined reports of action: "The department congratulates you and the officers and men of the *Hartford* upon the gallant passage of the Port Hudson batteries, and also of the battery at Grand Gulf. Although the remainder of your fleet were not successful in following their leader, the department can find no fault with them. All appear to have behaved gallantly, and to have done everything in their power to secure success. Their failure can only be charged to the difficulties in the navigation of the rapid current of the Mississippi, and matters over which they had no control."

Very soon important operations were

begun in earnest against Mobile; but before he left the river Farragut assisted in those against Donaldsonville, where his guns opened with such a flanking fire on the enemy that he assisted materially in the reduction of the place. Grand Gulf was also bombarded; and his vessels kept shifting from one place to another, doing good service as the occasion demanded.

Early in August, we find Farragut in his old flagship in New York, and with him the *Richmond* and the *Brooklyn*. All of them required extensive repairs. They were visited by thousands of people, anxious to see the heroic old ships with their battle scars and bruises.

It was not until January, 1864, that everything was in readiness for the second great expedition to the Gulf; and in the midst of a snow-storm, Farragut put out from Sandy Hook, with his flag again flying from the *Hartford*. The word "Mobile" was written on

the mind of every man from forecastle to cabin. Upon his arrival the admiral made a survey of the forts and surroundings of Mobile, and immediately made the following report: "On the morning of the 20th inst., I made a reconnoissance of Forts Morgan and Gaines. I went in over the bar in the gunboat *Octorara*, Lieutenant Commander Lowe taking the *Itasca* in company as a precaution against accident. We passed up to Land Island, and laid abreast of the light-house on it. The day was uncommonly fine, and the air very clear. We were distant from the forts three (3) and three and a half (3½) miles, and could see everything distinctly. So it was easy to verify the statement of the refugee McIntosh in respect to the number of guns visible on the bastions of the fort. I could count the guns and the men who stood by them; could see the spiles that had been driven across from Fort Gaines to the channel opposite

Fort Morgan, the object of which is to force the ships to keep as close as possible to the latter. There was no vessel in the bay except one transport steamer.

"I am satisfied that if I had one ironclad at this time, I could destroy their whole force in the bay, and reduce the forts at my leisure, by co-operation with our land forces, say five thousand men. We must have about two thousand and five hundred men in the rear of each fort, to make regular approaches by land, and to prevent the garrison's receiving supplies and re-enforcements; the fleet to run the batteries, and fight the flotilla in the bay. But without ironclads, we should not be able to fight the enemy's vessels of that class with much prospect of success, as the latter would lie on the flats, where our ships could not go to destroy them. Wooden vessels can do nothing with them unless by getting within one or two hundred yards, so as to ram them or pour in a broadside.

"I am told by Mr. Shock, the first engineer, that two of the ironclads now being constructed at St. Louis are finished, and that three or four ought to be at this time. If I could get these, I would attack them at once."

He was fortunate in possessing very full and elaborate descriptions and maps of the Confederate works and the vessels of the inner harbor, which he obtained from a Northern mechanic who had been employed in Mobile at the beginning of the war, and who had used his time to good advantage. Managing to escape, he had reached Pensacola, and reported what he had learned to Farragut. He was given a billet on board the *Octorara*.

Although it was seen that what this man had told was true,—that the shores bristled with heavy guns, the channels were alive with torpedoes, some formidable vessels were in waiting, and a huge ram had been constructed,—Farragut

was nothing daunted. All he was to do, all he wished for, was to get at them. But many months were to go by before the orders were received and everything was in readiness. There had been some desultory bombardment of the forts; but unaccountable delays had been made by the department, and winter, spring, and midsummer passed before everything was ready.

Meantime affairs had been going better with the Northern forces on land and sea. Considerable victories had been gained, the Mississippi was opened, and the *Kearsarge* had sunk the *Alabama*. Farragut had been praying for a heavy ironclad, and at last he was informed that the double-turreted monitor *Tecumseh* had arrived at Pensacola. Then orders to attack were immediately issued.

On the 4th of August Farragut wrote his wife a letter that has already been

published; but it is so beautiful, so full of interest and of the very essence of the man, that it is well to insert it here:—

"Flagship 'Hartford,'
"Western Gulf Blockading Squadron,
"Off Mobile, Aug. 4, 1864.

"*My dearest Wife,*—I write and leave this letter for you. I am going into Mobile Bay in the morning, if 'God is my leader,' as I hope He is; and in Him I place my trust. If He thinks it is the proper place for me to die, I am ready to submit to His will, in that as all other things. My great mortification is that my consorts, the ironclads, were not ready to have gone in yesterday. The army landed last night, and are in full view of us this morning; and the *Tecumseh* has not yet arrived from Pensacola.

"God bless and preserve you, my darling, and my dear boy, if anything

should happen to me; and may His blessings also rest upon your dear mother and all your sisters and their children!

"Your devoted and affectionate husband, who never for one moment forgot his love, duty, or fidelity to you his devoted and best of wives.

"D. G. FARRAGUT.

"To MRS. D. G. FARRAGUT,
"Hastings on the Hudson, N.Y."

A few hours after writing this letter the *Tecumseh* joined the fleet; and at daylight the next morning the signal was made to weigh anchor and to make in toward the harbor.

Strange to say, according to the original plan, Farragut was not to lead in the *Hartford*. The wooden vessels were lashed together in the following order. The *Brooklyn*, Captain James Alden, commander, led the fleet, with the *Octorara*, Lieutenant Commander C. H.

Green, on the port side. Next came the flagship *Hartford*, Captain Percival Drayton, with the *Metacomet*, Lieutenant Commander J. E. Jewett; the *Richmond*, Captain T. A. Jenkins, with the *Port Royal*, Lieutenant Commander B. Gheradi; the *Lackawana*, Captain G. B. Marchand, with the *Seminole*, Commander E. Donaldson; the *Monongahela*, Commander F. H. Strong, with the *Kennebec*, Lieutenant Commander W. P. McCann; the *Ossipee*, Commander W. E. LeRoy, with the *Itasca*, Lieutenant Commander George Brown; and the *Oneida*, Commander R. M. Mullany, with the *Galena*, Lieutenant Commander C. H. Wells, completed the line. It was only at the earnest solicitation of his officers that the admiral had given the honor of leading to the *Brooklyn;* but so much depended upon his own personality in the conflict, and the safety of the flagship that it was deemed best not to submit her to the earliest and

heaviest fire. "Exposure is one of the penalties of rank in the navy," said Farragut in discussing the matter; "and, no matter where the flagship is, she will be the main target of the enemy."

On steamed the fleet. The batteries and forts could be seen lying ominously silent. Under the protection of the guns the Confederate rams and ironclads lurked in readiness. Huge columns of smoke poured up from their funnels, showing that the fires were blazing and that they were ready for the spring into action.

At 6.45 the *Tecumseh* fired the shot that opened the ball, but the forts did not reply for twenty minutes. Then they broke out into sheets of flame and smoke. The Confederate rams and ironclads joined in, concentrating their fire upon the wooden vessels. Farragut had himself lashed in the rigging below the maintop, in order to be in a position where he could overlook the move-

ments of every vessel. All at once he saw the *Brooklyn* ahead of him reverse her engines, and a cry rang out that sounded above the roaring of the cannon. Looking ahead through the smoke, he saw a sight that would have caused a fainter heart than his to fail entirely. Where was the *Tecumseh?* What had become of the vessel in which he trusted so much? She had been placed under the command of a man whom he knew and loved, the brave Craven. Nothing could be seen but the tops of her turrets slowly going down in the muddy waters of the bay. She had struck the first of the torpedoes. The whole line was thrown into confusion, for the channel was comparatively narrow; but no such word as "falter" did the admiral know. "Signal for close action!" he shouted to the group of officers below on the quarter-deck. "Full speed ahead!" and, passing the *Brooklyn*, he swept on to the

head of the line, the place where he had felt that he should be. In front of him were the little buoys that were supposed to mark the hidden mines; but what cared he for them? He determined, as he afterwards expressed it, "to take the chances." Every vessel in the fleet broke out into mighty cheers, and followed their beloved leader. Turning to the north-west, he kept to the channel, endeavoring to come as close to the forts as was practicable. "Damn the torpedoes. Go ahead!" may never have been spoken by him, but it was his sentiment; and to-day it possesses a significance in the ears of the navy,—it is a watchword that will never die. The masonry flew from the fort as his heavy broadside crushed into it; and then, as he put his helm a little more to starboard, he saw the great ram *Tennessee* coming out to meet him. This was the craft that the *Tecumseh* was expected to van-

quish. She was probably then the most formidable vessel in the world. Presenting but a little target, her sloping iron sides were built at an angle designed to deflect the heaviest solid round shot. She had four ports a side from which she fought, filled with four seven-inch Brooks rifles. Forward and aft she carried two nineteen-inch Columbiads. The *Hartford* gave her a broadside as she approached, but did not stop, continuing straight on for the gunboats, *Selma*, *Gaines*, and *Morgan*, who were pouring a raking fire into her, to which she could not reply, even with her single heavy bow gun; for its carriage had been shattered by a shell from the fort.

It is said that Farragut always fought as though it were a personal conflict, as if he kept his anger under full control, but was determined to kill, no matter what dangers threatened. It was his one desire and aim to reach the enemy's

heart. Without ceremony, then, he cast off the *Metacomet* from his side, gave her orders to head for the *Selma*, and turned his own attention to the *Morgan* and the *Gaines*. He forced them into the shallow waters, where the latter caught fire beneath the very guns of the fort, and the *Morgan* fled to the mouth of the Mobile River.

The *Metacomet* succeeded in running up to the *Selma* and capturing her. Farragut turned from watching the chase, and rejoiced to see that all of his vessels, except the ill-fated *Tecumseh* had passed the batteries. He descended to the deck, and was telling his signal officer to order the fleet to come to anchor, when a cry went up,—"The ram! the ram! the *Tennessee!*"

Farragut had often spoken in his personal correspondence of the contempt he personally felt for what he termed the "ram fever," but now whether the fever was to be a scare or a scourge

must be proven. Steering straight for the fleet, came the monstrous *Thing*. Admiral Buchanan, bold and tried, was in command of her. Farragut changed the signal that was about to be hoisted; and once more he swept aside the age of steam and gunpowder, and went back to the tactics of Andrea Doria, to the days of the beaked ships.

"Signal the vessels to run her down!" he said tersely; and immediately he gave further orders to get up the *Hartford's* anchor that had just been let go, and to join in the charge full speed. Captain Strong was in the *Monongahela*, the rearmost vessel, and was still moving up the bay, when he perceived that he was the ram's first object of attack. He sheered out from the fleet, and with a full head of steam he drove straight at her. He struck her fair and square. The iron prow and cutwater of his vessel were crunched and carried away; and, as he swung out, he poured a broad-

side at the ram from a range of but fifteen yards. His guns were of eleven inch calibre; but the shot bounded harmlessly from the heavy mail. He wheeled, and, despite his crippled bows, came back once more to the attack. Beyond all doubt this first bold charge had saved some of the vessels of the fleet, for it had stopped the *Tennessee's* mad onslaught.

Now came the *Lackawanna*, the foam rolling away from her cutwater, as, under full headway, she struck the ram abaft the quarter. She glanced off from the iron sides, but she had almost rolled the huge craft over with the shock she gave. So great was the force, however, that she stove in her own topsides, her stern being cut away within three feet of the water's edge. She had sprung a bad leak. Luckily, a gunner on the *Lackawanna* had fired his piece just at the moment it bore upon one of the heavy shutters of the *Tennessee*. The

muzzle of the great gun was but twelve feet away, and the solid shot broke the shutter into fragments that carried death and destruction into the ironclad. Through the shattered port the rebel gunners could be seen. Words were exchanged between the opposing crews; and, in their anger and desire to *do something*, the Yankee gunners heaved a holystone, and even a spittoon was thrown through the opening at their jeering foes.

Some one forward on the *Lackawanna* shouted out, "Here comes the *Hartford!*" and down she charged. With her huge weight the force of the blow would have been almost overwhelming; but the *Tennessee* sheered a little, and the *Hartford's* impact was but a glancing one. She ground along her adversary's side, and came to a standstill. At the distance of only fifteen feet she poured in her whole broadside of nine-inch solid shot, but they broke

into fragments or fell harmlessly back into the water. But those of the *Tennessee* ripped through the sides, and strewed the *Hartford's* deck with dead and wounded. One 150-pound shell, in exploding, drove the fragments through the spar and berth deck into the hold below among the wounded. Farragut circled off, in order to come back once more, and there and then sink or be sunk.

The *Lackawanna* and the *Hartford* were now driving down two sides of a triangle with the ram as their objective point. By some accident the former vessel struck the flagship a little forward of the mizzen, ripping away her bulwark to within two feet of the water line. At first it was thought that the brave old *Hartford* would go down; but, when the admiral perceived he still floated, he called for a full head of steam again, intending to send the wounded hulk on board the enemy once more. But the

slow little monitors had by this time crawled up. The *Chickasaw* and the *Manhattan* were getting in their work. Lieutenant Perkins, the crack shot of the navy, sighted one of the heavy guns, which caught the ram on her stern port shutter and traversed her full length. Another shot carried away the steering gear, smashing the chains. Her smoke-stack was now tottering, and soon fell over the side. By the hammering and pounding many of her shutters became jammed. She ceased to reply, and lay there, as an eye-witness wrote, "Like a bleeding stag at bay among the hounds." Her fate was sealed. The brave Admiral Buchanan was wounded. Her commander, Johnston, looking out from her forward port, saw the *Ossipee* under Commander LeRoy bearing down hard upon him. Not far away, upon the same vindictive errand of destruction were sweeping forward the *Monongahela* and the *Lackawanna*. If

they struck him in his helpless condition, down he would go; and, just in time to prevent the catastrophe, he hoisted the white flag. The *Ossipee* was so near at that moment that a collision could not be prevented, and she rasped along the ram's sides. Commander LeRoy received Captain Johnston's surrender on the deck of his own vessel which now made fast to the *Tennessee*.

It was ten minutes past ten when Farragut brought his fleet to anchor to repair damages. The killed and wounded in all of his vessels amounted to three hundred and thirty-five, twenty-five of whom met their death on board the *Hartford*. The loss of the *Tecumseh*, which had gone down with her captain and one hundred and thirteen of her crew, cast a gloom over all the fleet, despite the victory. But one little incident must not be forgotten. As the *Hartford* dashed ahead to lead the line, she dropped Acting Ensign

Nields with a boat's crew to pick up the survivors of Craven's ship; and in the storm of shot and shell he pulled to within about six hundred yards of the forts, and saved many lives of those struggling in the waters. During the height of the action Farragut found time to call attention to this brave deed. The only other vessel besides the *Tecumseh* that was lost was the gunboat *Philippi* which was heavily hit and ran ashore.

When the news of this great victory reached the North, the people cheered for days. The forts at Mobile were surrounded. Fort James fell easily into the hands of the northern forces; and, after a short bombardment, Fort Morgan capitulated. Mobile, which had been a thorn in the flesh of the administration, was completely in the Union power.

The British *Army and Navy Gazette*, up to that time altogether in favor of the Confederacy, as had been most

British papers, took a decided change upon receiving news that Mobile had fallen. In an editorial published in August of that year it says, "Already a fleet of transports has sailed from New York to supply the doughty admiral, whose feats of arms place him at the head of his profession, and certainly constitute him the first naval officer of the day, as far as actual reputation, won by skill, courage, and hard fighting goes." Under date of August 12, Farragut writes, "Of course, you see how the papers are puffing me; but I am like Brownell's old cove, — 'All I want is to be let alone,' to live in peace (if I survive this war) with my family." Great deeds and simple needs, of a truth! Then he goes on: —

"The small gunboats arrived just in good time. The *Glasgow* and *Loyall* were my chief dependents for light work. The latter was mistaken by the enemy for a torpedo boat. I have quite

a colony here now,—two forts, a big fleet, and a bay to run about in." How this attitude makes us love the man!

When everything was reduced to his satisfaction and placed in good order, Farragut returned to Pensacola, and he sailed thence for the North on November 30, 1864. Great were the honors offered him. Presents and tokens of esteem were showered upon him, but he received them all with the quiet dignity of a great and simple mind. A man brave in spirit, possessing a religious sentiment, and, above all, a sense of humor can never have his head turned by anything that may happen him on earth.

He saw no further active service during the war. On July 26, 1866, Congress created the grade of admiral, and conferred the office on Farragut with the applause of the nation.

In company with his wife, in June,

1867, he made a cruise in the frigate *Franklin* in European waters.

It was forty years since he had seen the shores of Europe. Then he was a midshipman; now he bore the highest rank that his country could confer upon him. Everywhere he was fêted, toasted, and generously greeted. Crowned heads and great people were anxious to meet him. The journal he kept during this cruise is so interesting that it could be read with profit by any one interested in the man.

No American before or since has been paid such honors. And with what delight do we turn to his own comments on these affairs! His humble belief in his God, his simple faith, and his sturdy republicanism made him proof against any temptations to indulge in self-praise or to show by word or deed that all this adulation had changed his character. Nothing had changed it. The truly great are the really simple; and, whether

Farragut was talking with a king or a cartographer, his manners were the same. He was the admiral, the officer, the American gentleman, interested, courteous, and self-assured, no matter in what surroundings.

After a very fine voyage, with good weather and favoring winds, the *Franklin* put into the harbor of Cherbourg on the evening of July 14. Under the date of the 21st of the month the admiral makes the following entry in his journal: —

"Went to Paris with Mrs. Farragut, and let the officers go as they wished to see the Exposition. . . . Called upon by nearly all the Americans in Paris. We visited the Exposition daily during our stay. I did not see half of the departments," — and here the sailor crops out; for he adds most pertinently, "saw pretty much all the boats and guns, however," then continuing: "Vice-Admiral Halstead was exhibiting a new system of iron-clad with upper decks and tripod masts, —

upper works for comfort of the crew. I do not think an ironclad can be so constructed as to float easily with all the appurtenances for sail and steam, and the additional superstructure of decks, having at the same time armor thick enough to resist 15 or 20 inch shot."

What would the admiral have said to the armored belt, the great barbette and turret plating of to-day, to military masts and fighting tops and all of it? It is a strange thing how the old sailors of the days of heave and haul stuck by their wooden ships. They hated to see them go. Farragut had often said, "I am not afraid of the ironclads"; and off Mobile on June 21, 1864, while expecting the fleet of Admiral Buchanan to come out and give battle, he wrote thus: "The question has to be settled, iron *versus* wood; and there never was a better chance to settle the sea-going qualities of ironclad ships. We are ready today to try anything that comes along,

be it wood or iron, in reasonable quantities." Everywhere he went in Europe he closely observed everything that had had to do with his craft and calling, but especially did he make note of the transition then going on in naval architecture. The unending struggle between armor and armament had begun.

On July 26 the admiral made the following entry in his journal: —

"Heard that the empress was coming to Cherbourg in her yacht. I hastened down to Cherbourg, exchanged notes with Admiral Reynaud, and promised to participate in the honors to her Majesty.

"At ten o'clock P.M. received an invitation to dine with the emperor in Paris."

So the admiral left Captains Pennock and LeRoy to do the honors, should the beautiful but capricious lady put in an appearance; and he was off again for Paris. That evening, in company with the American minister, General Dix, he

appeared at the Tuileries; but let Farragut tell the story of his first informal meeting with royalty, — the emperor Napoleon III. : —

"On entering [he writes] I was met by his Majesty, who shook hands and welcomed me to France. General Dix was placed on the right and I on the left of the emperor, the ministers of foreign affairs and marine in front. The others, ten in number, I did not know." They talked of ships and naval inventions; and the admiral's only comment, after recording the substance of some of the talk, was: "He led the conversation in everything, and talked freely on subjects that he felt an interest in."

And so it was through his entire cruise in foreign waters. Everywhere did he create the same impression of force and character: everywhere Americans could look upon him with pride. He dined with the Grand Duke Constantine of Russia, he reviewed the Russian fleet with honors

only accorded to visiting royalty, he dined with the king of Sweden, Charles XV.; and in return for all these civilities he gave numerous receptions on board the flagship. In fact, the admiral, during this visit, spent his whole income for the time in entertaining; not for himself, he felt, but for the honor of his country. Of his dining with the King of Denmark and his son George, King of Greece, the admiral writes, "The king was pleased to drink the prosperity of my country and my own individuality." There was one little incident that must have appealed to him greatly, and one that shows how kindly must have been the feeling of Russia to the Union during the war. In the signal orders of the Russian navy this sentence occurs: "Let us remember the glorious examples of Farragut and his followers at New Orleans and Mobile."

In England he was no less welcome. Every facility for visiting shipyards and

proving-grounds was given him. The Lords of the Admiralty could not do enough for him. The Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh became really his friends; and with the queen he held a delightful and most informal interview.

Leaving England, he went with his fleet to the Mediterranean. Everywhere it was the same story, — fêtes, receptions, and a royal welcome. From Gibraltar to the Bosphorus, and from Constantinople back again, the *Franklin* and the American fleet, officers and men, were guests of honor. Farragut visited his father's birthplace, the island of Minorca; and he might have been a prince returning to his own. But all this left no impression upon him except as evidences of good will to him and his country; and the hero of Mobile — "the sea king of the sovereign West," as Holmes calls him — returned as simple and unspoiled as he had left.

The *Franklin* arrived in New York on the 10th of November, 1868. The following summer the admiral made a visit to the Pacific Coast with his wife. While on his return East, he was taken ill with heart disease, and was delayed in Chicago by a severe illness, but managed to reach home.

The navy department placed the steamer *Tallapoosa* at his disposal, and with his family he was conveyed to Portsmouth, N.H. He knew he was near his end; and, as he reached the harbor and listened to the sound of the salute of honor, he looked up at the blue flag flying from the masthead. "It would be well," said he, "if I died now in harness."

The sloop-of-war *Dale* was then lying dismantled in the Portsmouth Navy Yard. One day the old admiral wandered aboard. The quartermaster in charge of the vessel was an old sailor; and, noticing that the admiral's

step was faltering, he assisted him. As Farragut went over the side and the sailor saluted him, the great admiral turned and looked back through the gangway. "This is the last time," he remarked with a sad expression on his face, "that I shall ever tread the deck of a man-of-war." It was a true foreboding. He died at the house of Rear-Admiral Pennock, the commander of the navy yard, on the 14th of August, 1870, at the age of sixty-nine.

Great is the love and veneration in which the country must ever hold his name. Those who have seen the statue of him in Madison Square, in New York, can realize what the presence of the man in the full zenith of his power must have been.

His simplicity, his words, and his spirit animated, beyond all doubt, the heart of America's living naval hero, the man who had served with him and had seen him fight,—George Dewey.

The noblest tribute that can be paid to the great deeds of the living is to compare them to the great deeds of the dead. To say truly of any naval officer, "He is like Farragut," is the highest praise our lips can speak to-day.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Those readers who wish for a more extended knowledge of our first and, perhaps, greatest admiral, can wisely be referred to the following list of books. This list does not pretend to include every biography or history of Admiral Farragut. Its purpose is merely to afford a selection which will enable the reader to cover the ground from all points of view.

I. LIFE AND CAREER OF DAVID GLASGOW FARRAGUT, by P. C. Headley (New York, 1865: D. Appleton & Co.). This work, which is faulty and inaccurate in many respects, is yet interesting and informative, inasmuch as it discloses the popular appreciation of the admiral while he still stood in the great glare of the war. This was the first biography of him to appear.

II. FARRAGUT AND OUR NAVAL COMMANDERS, by J. T. Headley (New York,

1867: E. B. Treat & Co.), contains a briefer and juster, although far from errorless, account of the admiral.

III. Our Admiral's Flag Abroad, by J. E. Montgomery (New York, 1869: G. P. Putnam & Son), is a very careful and complete though somewhat lengthy narrative of the European cruise which Farragut made in the *Franklin* the previous year. It is full of interesting incident, and goes far to make up the full history of the last part of the admiral's life.

IV. In the Essays in Modern Military Biography, by Mr. C. C. Chesney (London, 1874: Longmans, Green & Co.), the author devotes a considerable chapter to "Admirals Farragut and Porter and the Navy of the Union." The value of this lies chiefly in its worth as a foreign scientific opinion.

V. The Life of David Glasgow Farragut, embodying his Journal and

his Letters, by his son, Loyall Farragut (New York, 1879: D. Appleton & Co.), is by far the most interesting work to read in this connection, containing as it does the ever valuable diary and letters of the admiral. His accounts of his experiences on land and sea, from Persia to the Pacific, show him to have been an able writer, a keen observer, and a shrewd critic of men and deeds. The life itself is of course of especial interest, coming from such an intimate and authentic source.

VI. ADMIRAL FARRAGUT by Captain A. T. Mahan (New York, 1892: D. Appleton & Co.), is the work of a naval officer who has made himself famous as a scientific author of many books relating to his profession. As one might expect, the volume in question is one of research and criticism rather than of personal biography. It is well worth studying as the best representative work on Farragut from the standpoint described.

VII. MIDSHIPMAN FARRAGUT, by James Barnes (New York, 1896: D. Appleton & Co.).

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